

How Many Animals Do You Own?

Most people are aware of the basic laws pertaining to animal control, but many are not aware of the pet limit per household. Prince George's County code states that a single residence may not have more than four animals (over four months old) larger than a guinea pig without having a permit. Birds, rabbits, and fish are excluded, but most other larger animals are counted towards the number of animals a residence is allowed. A person keeping or harboring more than four animals larger than a guinea pig must apply for an Animal Hobby Permit.

To acquire an Animal Hobby Permit, the pet owner must fill out a short application about the animals to be covered under the permit. The owner must list each of the animal's county license number and rabies vaccination number (for dogs, cats and ferrets) along with a general description of the animal. Submitted with a nominal five-dollar fee, the application is sent to the Prince George's County Animal Management Division and an inspection by an animal control officer is scheduled. The inspection is to ensure that each animal has the proper provisions provided under the law (proper veterinary care, food, water, shelter, space, and light) and that the excess of animals is not a nuisance to the community (i.e. objectionable odors, excessive noise, or lack of proper confinement). The Animal Hobby Permit must be renewed annually for as long as the household keeps more than four animals.

Violators of the Animal Hobby Permit law are subject to penalties starting at \$50 with possible additional fines for failure to license animals, failure to provide proof of rabies vaccination, creating a nuisance, having unsanitary conditions, or cruelty to animals.

If you would like copies of the Animal Hobby Permit law, an Animal Hobby Permit application, or to report a resident in violation of the Animal Hobby Permit law, please call the City of College Park Animal Control Office at 301-864-8877 or email at lthiele@ci.college-park.md.us.